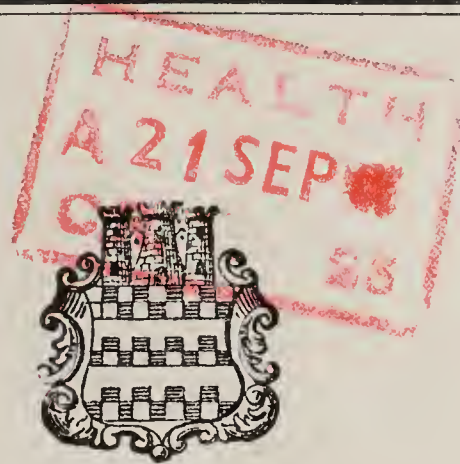




BOROUGH OF OKEHAMPTON

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE

YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1960



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Year ended 31st December, 1960

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF

Medical Officer of Health

E. D. ALLEN-PRICE, M.D., CH.B., D.P.H.

Borough Engineer and Public Health Inspector

R. A. BRUNSKILL, M.INST.R.A., M.R.S.H.

Assistant to Public Health Inspector

E. FURSE

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MISS J. M. SHORT



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MR. MAYOR, ALDERMEN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I beg to submit my Annual Report for the year ending 31st December, 1960, in accordance with the instructions of the Ministry of Health.

The general health of the Borough has been good throughout the year, and there were no epidemics of any notifiable disease.

The vital statistics are set out in the tables below.

SECTION "A"

General Statistics

Area (statute acres)	...	...	...	786
Population – 1931 Census	...	...	...	3,519
Population – 1951 Census	...	...	...	3,897
Estimated home population – mid-1960	...	...	...	3,900
Number of inhabited houses	...	...	...	1,255
Rateable value	...	...	...	£50,174
Product of the Penny Rate	...	...	...	£202
Loan Debt	...	...	...	£179,122

Vital Statistics

				Male	Female	Total
BIRTHS	...	...	...	25	18	43
Legitimate	...	...	...	25	18	
Illegitimate	...	...	...	–	–	
DEATHS	...	...	...	30	35	65

England
and Wales

LIVE BIRTHS

Number	...	...	...	...	...	43	
Rate per 1,000 population	...	...	...	...	...	11.2	17.1
Corrected birth rate	...	...	...	...	...	11.9	
Illegitimate live births % of total live births	...	...	...	...	...	–	

STILLBIRTHS

Number	...	...	...	...	...	1	
Rate per 1,000 total live and still births	...	...	...	...	...	22.7	19.7
Total live and still births	...	...	...	...	...	44	

INFANT MORTALITY RATES

Infant deaths under one year	...	...	...	...	...	nil	
Total infant deaths per 1,000 total live births	...	...	...	...	...	–	21.7
Legitimate infant deaths per 1,000 legitimate live births	...	...	...	...	...	–	
Illegitimate infant deaths per 1,000 illegitimate live births	...	...	...	...	...	–	
Neo-natal mortality rate (deaths under 4 weeks per 1,000 total live births)	...	...	...	...	...	–	
Early neo-natal mortality rate (deaths under 1 week per 1,000 total live births)	...	...	...	...	...	–	
Perinatal mortality rate (stillbirths and deaths under 1 week combined per 1,000 total live and still births)	...	...	...	...	...	22.7	

MATERNAL MORTALITY (including abortion)

Number of deaths...	...	...	...	...	...	nil
Rate per 1,000 total live and still births	...	...	...	...	...	—

DEATHS

Number	...	...	...	...	...	...	65	
Death rate per 1,000 population	...	...	...	...	...	...	16.6	11.5
Corrected death rate	...	...	...	...	...	...	11.9	

Year	Population	Birth Rate	Death Rate
1956	3,900	12.8	15.3
1957	3,910	8.7	10.4
1958	3,890	10.5	16.4
1959	3,900	14.8	16.2
1960	3,900	11.2	16.6

Age at Death Table

Age at Death	Male	Female
Under 1 year	—	—
1–5 years	—	—
6–15 years	—	—
16–25 years	1	—
26–35 years	—	—
36–45 years	1	—
46–55 years	3	—
56–65 years	5	3
66–75 years	5	6
76 and over	15	26
TOTAL	30	35

The chief causes of death were as follows:

Tuberculosis	...	...	...	...	1
Cancer	...	...	...	...	9
Vascular diseases	...	...	...	...	10
Coronary diseases	...	...	...	...	10
Other heart diseases	...	...	...	...	5
Other circulatory diseases	...	...	...	...	5
Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	4
Bronchitis	...	...	...	...	1
Other respiratory diseases	...	...	...	...	1
Ulcer of the Stomach	...	...	...	...	2
Hyperplasia of the prostate	...	...	...	...	1
Other ill-defined diseases	...	...	...	...	11
Accidental	...	...	...	...	3
Suicide	...	...	...	...	2
TOTAL	...	...	...	...	65

SECTION "B"

General Provision of Health Services

There was no change in the general provision of the health service during the year.

National Assistance Act, 1948

No use was made during the year of the provisions of Section 47 of this Act.

Ambulances

A highly satisfactory service, which provides a twenty-four hour cover for the district as a whole, is given by the St. John Ambulance Brigade, under delegated powers from the Local County Health Authority.

Mass Radiography Unit

In May 1960, the Mass Radiography Unit visited Okehampton. A total of 118 people, over the age of 15 years, attended. No new cases requiring further treatment were discovered.

War Memorial Hospital

During the year 77 babies were born in the Okehampton War Memorial Hospital as Follows:

Okehampton Borough	...	...	...	23
Okehampton Rural	...	...	...	44
Others	...	...	...	10

SECTION "C"

Sanitary Circumstances of the Area

Water Supply — Sources

Supplies from watersheds in the hinterland of Dartmoor feed two intakes. One at Newbridge, three miles from the town on the Black-a-ven streams has been in operation since 1939, while the much older and smaller is $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles distant at Yes Tor on the Red-a-ven stream, and has been in use for about sixty years. Both are within the Okehampton Artillery firing ranges. Supplies at the intakes have been quite adequate throughout the year. Water is soft in character.

Rainfall

Rainfall records are normally taken monthly at Cranmere Pool and Newbridge on the watershed, and daily at the Filter Station and at the Pleasure Gardens. Returns are sent monthly to the Air Ministry Meteorological Office and the Devon River Board, and these are set out below for the past four years.

			1960	1959	1958	1957
Cranmere	...	...	74.55	70.00	—	96.70
Newbridge	...	...	83.60	56.70	—	73.40
Filter Station	...	...	71.57	60.01	58.33	55.65
Pleasure Gardens	...	...	73.30	59.58	55.48	49.11
Dry Days (no rain)	...		138	189	147	158

The driest months were June, May, March and August, and the wettest October, September, November and December in these orders. Dry spells were April–May (24 days) and June–July (17 days). The heaviest falls were 2.72" on September 30th and 2.33" on October 26th. There was more than 1" fall on eleven other days. Of the total rainfall over half fell in the last four months September–December. The weather on the watersheds remained fairly dry from March until July, but the available supply at the Intakes continued adequate.

Intake Mains

Approximately three miles of mains in the Artillery danger zones have again escaped serious damage and functioned properly throughout the year. On the No. 2 Black-a-ven Intake Main only minor adjustments of break pressure valves have been necessary. Scraping of further sections of this main should be considered. The usual quite unproductive work of clearing land drains on the abandoned works on the Okehampton Park Estates was again carried out.

Filtration and Treatment

The pressure filtration and line treatment plant at Brackentor has been in continuous operation throughout the year. Minor faults were remedied by the attendant in daily attendance.

A by-pass sluice valve with a hydrant so controls the supply that an emergency supply from the Intakes can now be diverted direct to the reservoir without passing through the filter station in case of emergency repairs.

No. 2 Filter was dismantled the diaphragm was plate welded and repaired, nozzles overhauled and refixed and sand washed and replaced by the Council staff.

Filters are normally washed daily by high-pressure air scour and kept up to a high operational standard which is essential owing to the intake of peaty solids. Heavy rainfalls on Dartmoor caused discolouration for short periods, and additional washing of filters was then carried out.

The treated water is clear, soft, colourless and of excellent taste. It is particularly pleasant for both personal use and domestic washing. Analyses indicate it to be of a very satisfactory standard of purity both bacteriologically and chemically. Of 32 samples taken for bacteriological analysis, all passed to Ministry of Health. Class 1 Standard. P.H. valves have been generally maintained at 7.0°. Three men operate on a rota of weekend duties at over-time rates.

Chlorination plant in the Filter Station is available for immediate use in case of emergency.

Service Reservoir

No special repairs were required

Distribution

Zonal distribution, giving a stabilised pressure in the controlled low-level area and maintaining pressure in the outer high-level zones, has now been in continuous operation for 23 years without interruption except for repairs.

Mains were regularly flushed and leak inspections continuously carried out. Leaks were found and repaired on 43 Corporation service pipes, 4 Corporation mains which were completely fractured, and on 24 consumer services. Maintenance work in clearing service pipes, mainly by force pump, was carried out on 40 services.

In Brackentor Lane the 6" and 4" mains are linked by three 1½" connecting pipes to reinforce supplies to high level zones.

The pressure gauge control box at Parklands has again proved most useful in connection with maintenance of proper pressures on the H.P. mains. Minor repairs and overhaul were carried out at the Station Road Pressure Reducing Valve.

There was again comparatively little frost during the year and the effect on the distribution system was quite negligible.

New services and supply pipes are now mainly laid in copper and polythene tubes. Service stopcocks fixed direct on the mains obviate cutting off main supplies during repairs. New services have been provided for 22 new houses at Wonnacotts Housing Estate, 4 new private properties and 3 existing properties. Additional mains at the Wonnacotts Housing Site, Crediton Road were connected, and 100 yards of 4" cast iron mains with Tyton joints were laid in Hatherleigh Road from Lyndridge to Vicarage Road.

Devon Water Bill

During the year the Council again conferred with the Devon County Council and other Local Authorities with regard to the provisions of the Bill. The Bill was presented in Parliament and referred to a House of Commons Committee at which the Council were represented. The Bill was ultimately rejected.

Though year 1960 was wetter than drought year 1959, the watersheds on Dartmoor remain surprisingly dry.

Again no restrictions on the distribution supply were necessary.

Drainage and Sewerage

Sewers and sewage disposal works have again continued to operate satisfactorily with no serious defects.

A new manhole cover was fixed in Fore Street East Bridge, and a lamp hole replaced in North Street. Minor repairs were again carried out to the 12" distribution pipes and screening tanks at the disposal works and further additional distribution channels were laid out by arrangement with the farmer.

Additional labour is provided for the farmer for clearing and spreading sludge when required. The irrigation channels were partially cleared of deposit and weeds. Consulting engineers were instructed to report on the disposal works.

Rivers and Streams

The East and West Ockment rivers are self-cleansing and very clean. Solid rubbish is periodically removed. During violent and prolonged rainstorms on September 30th the rivers' water level rose 3 feet above normal and over the banks in places. Similar circumstances in a less degree arose on October 26th. Very little damage occurred other than temporary flooding of low-lying cellars.

Public Conveniences

Throughout the year new public conveniences with a large public shelter at Fairplace Rest Garden have been in use. The structure is of brick with a flat roof and interior walls and floors of marble Terrazzo. Six women's and four men's water closets, and six stall urinal and four lavatory basins are provided. The old public conveniences adjoining St. James' Church were closed and dismantled.

Swimming Pool

The Swimming Pool and paddling pool, both of which are supplied by continuous running water, have been well maintained and conducted.

Public Cleansing, Refuse Collection and Disposal

Refuse collection and disposal have continued with weekly and twice-weekly collections. Normal street cleansing is daily by orderly truck, including Saturday afternoons and Sunday mornings.

Bulldozers have been used for levelling tips when available, but accommodation is becoming limited. Rodent control is carried out by the Council's own operator. The tip is regularly treated and sprayed daily or as necessary with tip dressing for the control of flies, which have again been less in number during the year. Considerable quantities of trade refuse together with refuse from egg grading and packing stations still cause problems and special steps were taken to deal with this. Preliminary enquiries as to suitable sites for a new tip were initiated during the year.

Litter Acts — Bye-laws

Special notices with regard to deposit of litter and fouling of footways were issued and displayed.

Salvage

Small quantities of scrap metals have been disposed of. There is still no worth-while demand for waste paper much of which has to be burnt on the tip.

Infectious Diseases and Disinfection

No cases of infectious diseases had to be dealt with for the twelfth year in succession. Minor disinfestation treatment has been in individual houses for flies.

Rodent Control

In accordance with Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food requirements rodent control continued as required throughout the year with a part-time operator. Block control has again been carried out where necessary to a progressively lessening extent, and incidence. Sewer treatment again showed comparatively little infestation and only in limited areas. One notice was served.

Factories and Workshops

Factories and Workshops have been kept in good condition. Inspections have been made in 81 instances and informal notice was given for want of cleanliness in two cases. Details of inspections carried out in accordance with the Factories Act, 1937 to 1959, are set out on pages 14 and 15.

Smoke Abatement

Little nuisance is caused and three minor cases were dealt with by informal action.

Fish Frying

Two establishments, one with cafe, have been well conducted.

Offensive Trades

Seven inspections were made and no action was necessary.

Sanitary Inspections of the Area

The following visits and inspections were carried out during the year:

Houses – repairs	...	...	...	...	...	78
Houses – rehousing	...	...	...	...	...	15
Drainage	...	...	...	...	...	25
Public Conveniences	...	...	...	...	...	52
Sewerage	...	...	...	...	...	34
Water Supply, including Housing	...	...	...	...	...	90
Rivers	...	...	...	...	...	27
Refuse Disposal	...	...	...	...	...	21
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	...	...	7
Dangerous Structures	...	...	...	...	...	3
Refuse Disposal Tip	...	...	...	...	...	28
Rodent Control	...	...	...	...	...	3
Tents and Vans	...	...	...	...	...	5
Schools	...	...	...	...	...	16
Disinfestation and Disinfection	...	...	...	...	...	3
Animals	...	...	...	...	...	4
Food and Meat Shops	...	...	...	...	...	142
Egg Packing Stations	...	...	...	...	...	12
Offensive Trades	...	...	...	...	...	3
Informal Notices – Remedied	...	...	...	...	...	7

SECTION “D”

Housing

Housing Repairs

Individual defective houses were inspected and five were rendered fit by informal notice.

Housing, Management, Maintenance and Repairs

Normal maintenance repairs have again been minor in character and small in numbers. All repairs except electrical and exterior painting are carried out by the Council's own small maintenance staff. Sixteen houses at Brayhams Terrace, North Road were externally repainted by contract.

Repairs are carried out as quickly as possible and while limited in extent, to avoid excessive maintenance and repair cost. This has been very evident in the case of the pre-war houses. Arrangements for thoroughly overhauling, cleansing, repairing and redecorating each house on change of tenancy virtually gives each new tenant a clean fresh house at the commencement of occupation. Tenants are also invited to exchange accommodation so as to reduce overcrowding and eliminate under-occupation. Further exchanges on these lines have been made. Detailed information as to housing maintenance costs were given in the Annual Report for 1957.

At Wonnacotts Housing Estate there were 18 houses and 4 flats in course of erection at the beginning of the year, and these were completed in December, 1960. Twelve additional houses were in progress at the end of the year.

One private house was in progress at the beginning of the year, six were completed during the year and three were in course of erection at the end of the year. The number of private houses built and in progress during the year was again approximately the same as the average for pre-war years.

SECTION "E"

Inspection and Supervision of Food

Milk

During 1960 samples of milk have been taken as follows:

	<i>Samples</i>	<i>Passed</i>	<i>Failed</i>
Undesignated	Nil	Nil	Nil
T.T.	22	19	3
T.T. Pasteurised	12	11	1

Of the samples taken from 11 producers, 8 had no failures, and similarly from 8 retailers 5 had no failures during the year.

Ice Cream

Samples of ice cream for bacteriological examination were taken during the year with the following results:

Grade 1	...	...	12	} Passed
Grade 11	...	...	2	

Slaughterhouses

One slaughterhouse has been in regular use and has been well maintained.

The arrangements made with the Rural District Council for Meat Inspection in the Borough have continued to function satisfactorily.

Details of the number of animals killed and inspected and the carcasses, parts or organs condemned are set out in the table on page 12.

In addition to the unsound meat and offal condemned at the slaughterhouse within the borough, two fowls were condemned each weighing five pounds, by reason of:

- (a) Intestinal inflammation.
- (b) Internal growth.

Bakehouses, Meat and Food Shops

These premises have been well maintained. Minor improvements have been carried out in a number of them. Fourteen inspections were made and two informal notices were given.

Bye-laws made under Section 15 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1955, for the proper handling of food sold for human consumption are in force.

The number of food premises in the area are as follows:

Grocers	...	...	...	...	13
Greengrocers	...	...	...	...	8
Confectioners	...	...	...	...	4
Bread and Cakes	...	...	...	...	4
Meat Shops	...	...	...	...	7
Fish Shops	...	...	...	...	2
Milk Shops	...	...	...	...	2
Dairies	...	...	...	...	3
Hotels and Bars	...	...	...	...	9
Cafes	...	...	...	...	8

There is also a very large and modern hatchery and one large and three smaller egg grading and packing stations all of which have been maintained in good order.

Other Foodstuffs

Foods have been examined and 32 condemnation certificates have been issued, these were mainly canned foods which had deteriorated owing to defective containers. The total weight of food condemned was 1 cwt. 3 stones 11 ozs. Condemned food is destroyed at the Council's refuse disposal tip.

Food Hygiene Regulations

In accordance with the Ministry of Food instructions implementation of the Regulations has been maintained as and where considered necessary with particular attention to markets and outside stalls and vans.

During recent years there has been a considerable increase in catering for bed and breakfast in a number of private houses during the tourist season, and this trend has continued.

Food Poisoning

No cases of food poisoning were notified during the year.

Samples taken under Section 2, Food and Drugs Act, 1955

Oxtail Soup	}	ALL GENUINE
Condensed Full Cream Milk		
Saccharin Tablets		
Danish Blue Cheese		
Biscuits and Butter		
Butter		
Nicotinamide Tablets		
Coffee and Chicory Essence		
Ham and Tongue Roll		
Processed Cheddar Cheese		
Ready Mixed Ice Cream Powder		
Table Jelly		
Clotted Cream Fudge		
Salad Cream		
Almond Flavouring		
Pork Sausages		
Buttersnap		
Dairy Ice Cream		
Ground Turmeric		
Beef Broth		

Milk – 89 samples

CARCASES AND OFFAL INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED IN WHOLE OR IN PART

	<i>Cattle, excluding Cows</i>	<i>Cows</i>	<i>Calves</i>	<i>Lambs and Sheep</i>	<i>Pigs</i>
Number Killed (if known)	302	27	1	1,295	551
Number inspected ...	302	27	1	1,295	551
<i>All diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysterci:</i>					
Whole carcasses con- demned	—	1	—	8	2
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned ...	145	16	—	119	32
Percentage of the num- ber inspected affec- ted with disease other than tuberculosis and cysticerici	48.13%	63.00%	—	9.80%	6.16%
<i>Tuberculosis only:</i>					
Whole carcasses con- demned	—	—	—	—	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned ...	2	—	—	—	8
Percentage of the num- ber inspected affec- ted with tuberculosis	0.66%	—	—	—	1.45%
<i>Cysticercosis:</i>					
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned ...	1	—	—	—	—
Carcases submitted to treatment by refrig- eration	1	—	—	—	—
Generalised and totally condemned ...	—	—	—	—	—

Total weight of unfit meat and offal condemned: 1 ton 16 cwt. 62 lbs.

SECTION "F"

Prevalence of, and Control over, Infectious and Other Diseases

Infectious Diseases Notified by Medical Practitioners

Only one case of measles was notified during the year, that in a small boy aged two years.

Infectious Diseases Notified by School Authorities

			<i>Ring Worm</i>	<i>Impetigo</i>	<i>Mumps</i>	<i>Gastro Enteritis</i>	<i>Chicken Pox</i>
Okehampton Secondary School	...	...	—	1	—	—	—
Okehampton Primary School	...	...	1	—	2	1	96
			—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	...	...	1	1	2	1	96
			—	—	—	—	—

Tuberculosis

At the end of the year 27 cases of Tuberculosis remained on the Register as follows:

<i>Pulmonary</i>		<i>Non-Pulmonary</i>	
<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>	<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>
14	10	2	1

One death was recorded during the year from Pulmonary Tuberculosis but no new cases were added to the Register.

In conclusion, I would thank the Mayor and Corporation for the ready hearing my proposals always receive, and the Public Health Staff and others who have assisted in the preparation of this report.

I am, Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

E. D. ALLEN-PRICE,

Medical Officer of Health.

Factories Acts, 1937 to 1959

1. INSPECTIONS FOR PURPOSES OF PROVISION AS TO HEALTH (including Inspections made by Public Health Inspectors)

<i>Premises</i>	<i>Number on Register</i>	<i>Number of</i>		
		<i>Inspec- tions</i>	<i>Written Notices</i>	<i>Occupiers Prosecuted</i>
(1) Factories in which Sec- tions, 1, 2, 3, 4 & 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	28	48	—	—
(2) Factories not included in (1) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority ...	12	28	—	—
(3) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding outworkers' premises)	5	5	—	—
TOTAL ...	45	81	—	—

2. CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which Prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred to H.M. Inspector	by H.M. Inspector	
Want of Cleanliness	2	2	—	—	—
Overcrowding	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable Temperature	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate Ventilation	—	—	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors	—	—	—	—	—
Sanitary Conven'ces (a) Insufficient	—	—	—	—	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective	—	—	—	—	—
(c) Not separate for sexes	—	—	—	—	—
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outwork)	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL ...	2	2	—	—	—

3. OUTWORK (Sections 110 and 111)

<i>Nature of Work</i>	SECTION 110			SECTION 111		
	<i>No. of out- workers in August list required by Section 110 (1) (c)</i>	<i>No. of cases of default in sending lists to Council</i>	<i>No. of pro- secutions for failure to supply lists</i>	<i>No. of instances of work in unwholesome premises</i>	<i>Notices served</i>	<i>Prosecu- tions</i>
Wearing Apparel (Making, etc.) ...	1	-	-	-	-	-

